

# CASTLEMAINE NATURALIST

MAY '83

79

## BANKSIAS OF THE EAST COAST.

Terry Collins

Banksias are uniquely Australian except for one tropical specimen which ranges across Northern Australia from Cape York to the Kimberleys. This banksia known as *Dentata* is found in New Guinea but where it is seen on our East Coast is mainly Cape York where it grows as a small straggly tree. The leaves appear misshapen with irregular serrations, and the flowers are small, yellow and very sparse: Of more than 50 other species found in Australia, nearly 40 are only located in Western Australia, so that none are found growing on each side of the continent.

There is a great range of terrain in which they are found. Swampy waterlogged heathland, dense bush of the ranges and exposed rockfaces overlooking the sea.

What we call the banksia flower is actually up to 1,000 individual flowers crowded in rows around a woody axis. As the flowers die seed capsules develop around the woody axis, inside these blister like capsules a pair of winged seeds are waiting to be released by heat such as a fire. The heat splits the capsule and the seeds then are released to drift away.

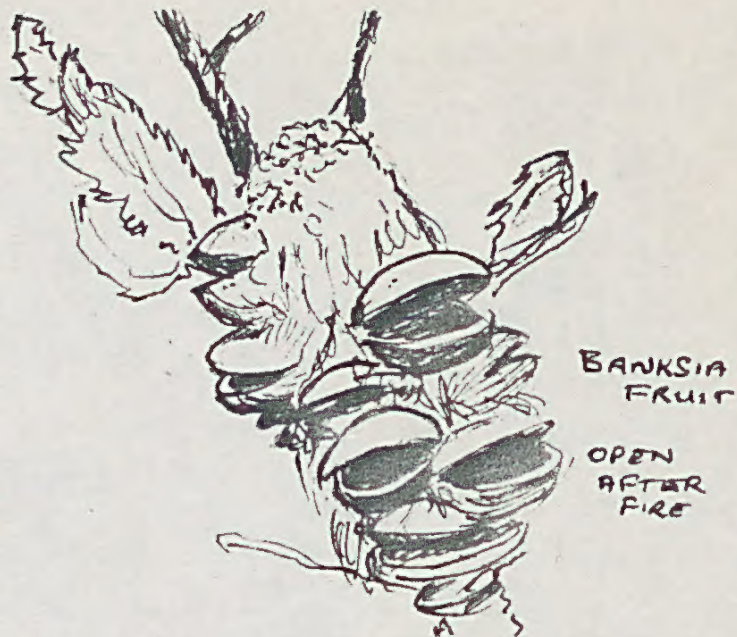
## B. COLLINA or B. SPINULOSA.

There is still some debate as to whether these are separate species or a variety of a single species. Their common name is Hairpin banksia as the flowers vary in colour from yellow to bronze usually with black styles in "hairpins". They make a good garden shrub and can grow to about 4m high, Leaves are small, white underneath and slightly serrated. Mainly found along the



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B. AEMULA OR B. SERRATIFOLIA.

Found mainly growing on Southern Queensland's coastal heath strip; A shrub growing in great profusion on the sandy slopes behind the frontal dunes. The flowers are large (25-30cm) changing from creamy white to yellow as they age. The leaves are long and then with shaply serrated edges.



B. SERRATA.

Similar to the Aemula except where the Aemula is a bushy shrub the Serrata grows into a tree (5-12m High) with thich gnarled trunk and branches. Leaves are serrated with grey flower spikes. A great feeder for the honey eaters as it is found in the coastal belt through Victoria to Queensland.

B. OBLONGIFOLIA or B. ASPLENIFOLIA.

Mainly found in Queensland, is a low straggly shrub (1-2m High). The leaves are lightly serrated up to 10cm long with a white underside and Prominent veins. Flowers are small grey in colour initially changing to yellow.

B. ERICIFOLIA.

Probably one of the most beautiful banksias with its heath like foliage and large flower spikes up to 35cm long changing from an immature bronze to flaming orange. It will grow to about 5m high and spread to nearly 3m. The main habitat for this species is the open forest and heath country along the N.S.W. coast. A great producer of nectar and a favorite with Victorian gardeners.

B. INTEGRIFOLIA.

Known as the coast banksia as it can be found hugging the exposed headlands along the coast from Victoria through to Cooktown Queensland. Also it will grow inland as demonstrated by its natural occurrence on Mt. William in the Grampians. It is a sturdy tree which can grow from 6m to 15m. The flowers are not overlarge but profuse and bright yellow.



## Birds

Flocks of Brown-headed Honeyeaters reported.  
Wattlebirds are back.

Terry Collins reported that Grey Currawongs have helped themselves to his tomatoes!

Stan Bruton sighted a Collared Sparrow-hawk and Common Bronzewing in Kaweka Wildflower Sanctuary in Hargreaves St.

Welcome Swallows were reported to have arrived just before the rain, as were a flock of Swifts which were seen about 6 pm flying just above tree-top level.

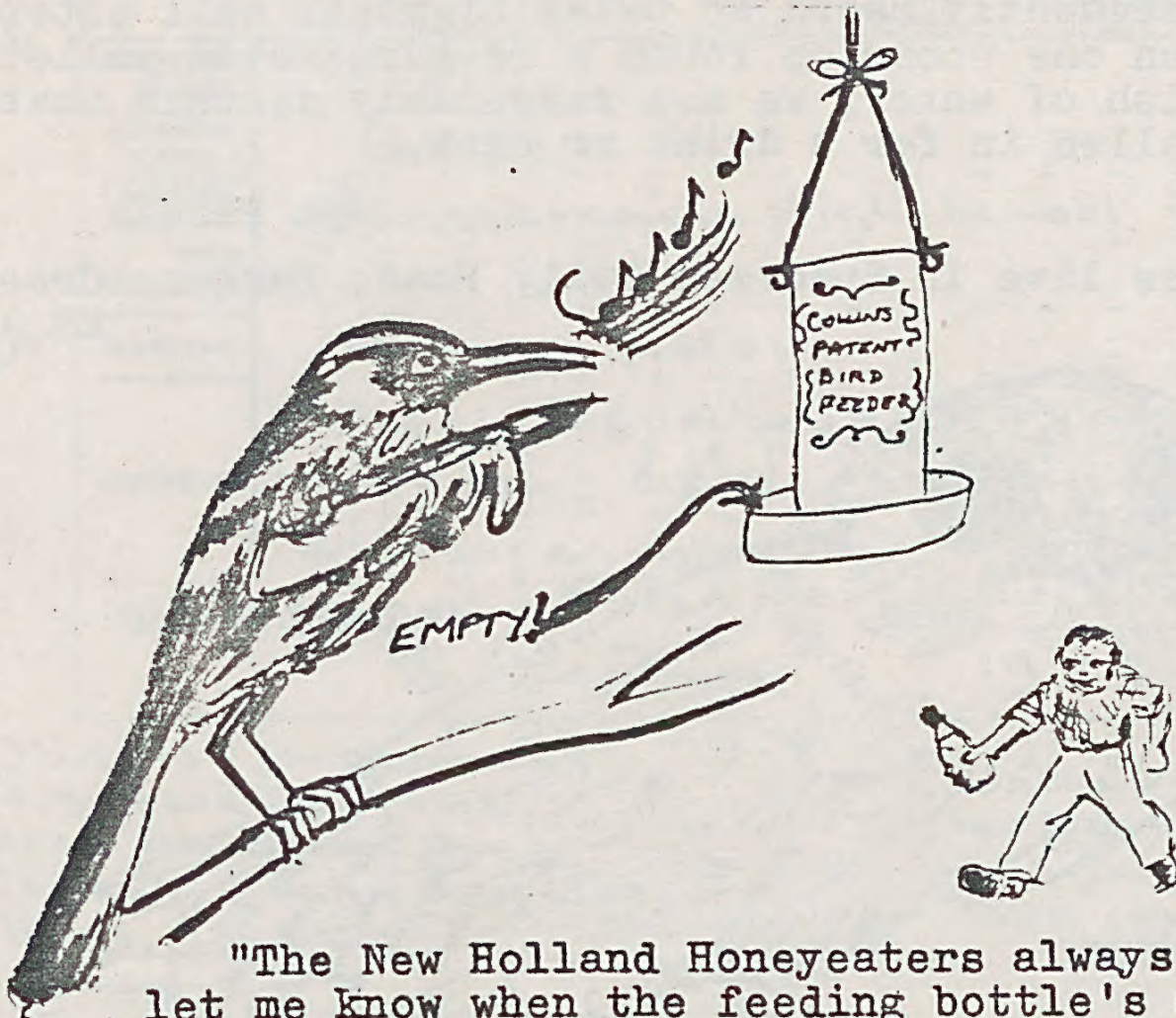
Honeyeaters are arriving back.

## Other

Processional Caterpillars are again in large numbers out at Campbells Creek

Joyce Chapman told us of feeding the Bluetongues in her garden on banana. They love it.

As the speaker for the evening was unable to come, Ern Perkins went home and collected some of his Eucalypt slides to show us. Though<sup>or</sup> such short notice it proved to be most informative and enjoyable. Thanks Ern.



"The New Holland Honeyeaters always  
let me know when the feeding bottle's empty!"

Terry C.



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## THE DROUGHT VISITORS AT PALMERS'

This is the complete list of birds known to have visited us for water during the drought. The number has reduced sharply since recent rain has resulted in puddles etc. becoming available once more.

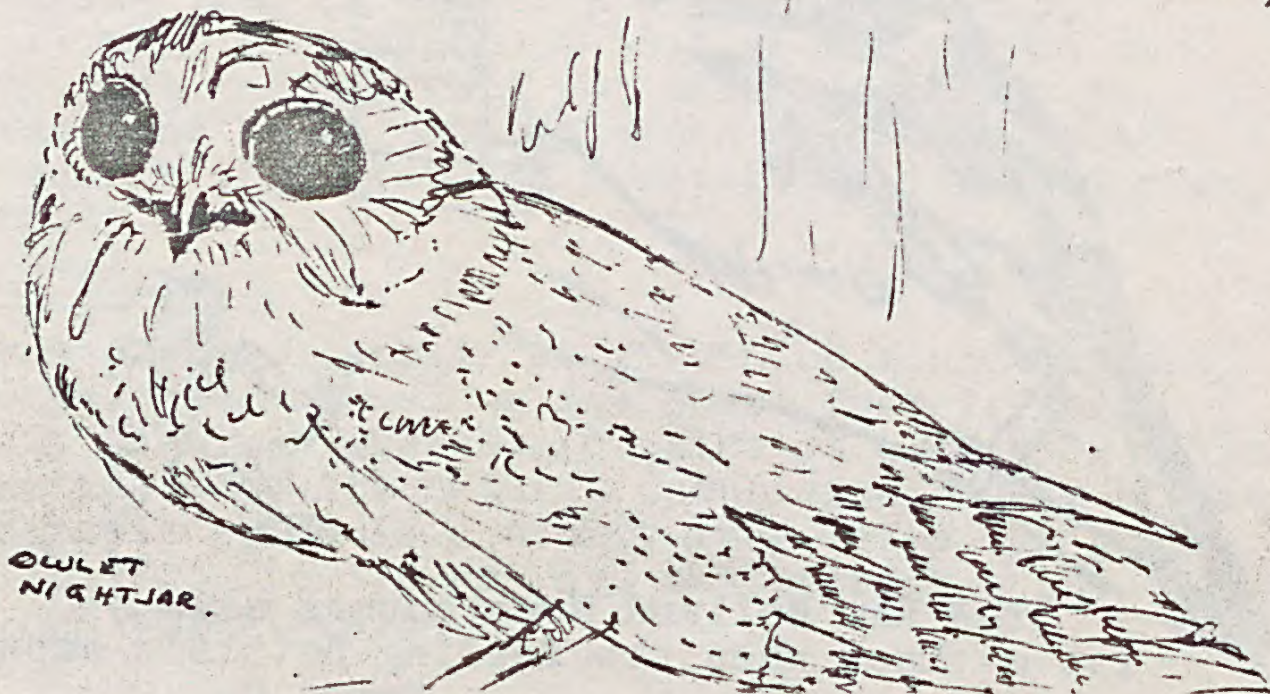
Yellow-rumped Thornbill  
Striated Thornbill  
Striated Pardalote  
Superb Blue Wren  
Red-capped Robin  
Scarlet Robin  
Yellow Robin  
Grey Fantail  
White-throated Treecreeper  
Red-browed Finch  
White-browed Scrubwren  
Grey Shrike-thrush  
Blackbird  
Grey Currawong

Silver Eyes  
Eastern Spinebill  
Brown-headed Honeyeater  
White-naped Honeyeater  
Fuscous Honeyeater  
Yellowfaced Honeyeater  
Yellow-tufted Honeyeater  
White-eared Honeyeater  
Black-chinned Honeyeater  
Red Wattlebird  
Crimson Rosella  
Eastern Rosella  
Common Bronzewing Pigeon  
White-backed Magpie.

As we frequently heard an Owlet Nightjar call after dark, and on one occasion found a re-gurgitated pellet beside a dish of water, we are reasonably certain that he, too, called in for a drink or bath.

Wyn Palmer

(The Palmers live in Specimen Gully Road, Barkers Creek.  
Ed.)





# The Club Record System

E.P.5

Do you know about the record cards?  
Unlike some other things, the cards are  
meant to be easy!

We should be making lots of records about  
lots of things. Will you help?

Castlemaine (Chewton.  
and Campbells Ck,  
Barkers Creek  
are all N2

B = Bird I = Invertebrate  
R = Reptile I = Insect  
A = Amphibian P = Plant  
M = Mammal G = Geological  
H = Historical

A map is available  
to show the grids.  
(These are used  
for most Victorian  
records)

This helps in filing

Leave blank  
if not known

Leave out if  
not known

	MAP AREA	N2	CATEGORY	B								
SCIENTIFIC NAME												
COMMON NAME	Galah											
LOCATION AND MAP REFERENCE	Castlemaine High School grounds											
HABITAT	Playing fields											
COMMENTS	Flock of about 100, at about 5.15 pm: Often seen in winter at about this time											
	<table border="1"><thead><tr><th colspan="3">N° OF SPECIMENS</th></tr><tr><th>SINGLE</th><th>FEW</th><th>COMMON</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td></td><td></td><td>~100</td></tr></tbody></table>				N° OF SPECIMENS			SINGLE	FEW	COMMON		
N° OF SPECIMENS												
SINGLE	FEW	COMMON										
		~100										
MEMBERS SIGNATURE		DATE										
E. Perkins		3-5-1983										

This is important  
e.g. swamp, lake,  
open paddock, pine  
forest, rocky outcrop,  
bush etc.

The cards could  
be kept for  
centuries, so  
put in the 19

Comments help to make

IF YOU NEED  
MORE SPACE WRITE



## TWO NEW BOOKS

We would like to bring to the attention of your members our latest release - 'Birds of Geelong' by Trevor Pescott. We believe this publication is the most important contribution to the study of the natural history of the Geelong region since Sir Charles Belcher's 'Birds of Geelong'.

'Birds of Geelong' describes the occurrence, status and distribution of all species of birds that have been recorded in the Geelong-Otway region - a total of 382 species. The area covered by the book extends from Werribee to Bacchus Marsh, Rokewood, Camperdown and Port Campbell, and includes the Bellarine Peninsula, Otway Ranges, Western District Lakes, Brisbane Ranges and You Yangs. The book has 200 pages with over 50 birds illustrated in black and white photographs.

The first printing of the volume has been limited to 1000 copies which we feel sure will sell very quickly. Reprinting will be done at a later date if the demand is there, but the first impression becomes the collector's item.

The price of the book is \$12.95 per copy, plus \$2.00 postage for single copies. For orders over \$25 postage is free.

There are order forms available at the meeting.

### THE FIELD NATURALISTS CLUB OF VICTORIA

NATIONAL HERBARIUM

THE DOMAIN

SOUTH YARRA, 3141

The Field Naturalists Club of Victoria is pleased to announce the forthcoming publication of a new book "What Fossil Plant is That?", by Dr J G Douglas. Publication date is expected to be June 1983 with a recommended retail price of \$9.95. As the book is aimed at a non-specialist audience the Council believes that it will appeal to a wide range of naturalists, not just those particularly interested in fossils, so is offering a special low pre-publication price of \$6.95 to enable as many members as possible to support this venture and obtain the book. Offer closes 31st May 1983.

FNCV Fossil Plant Book  
C/- National Herbarium  
The Domain  
SOUTH YARRA 3141

Please supply .... copies of What Fossil Plant

is That? @ \$6.95 each \* a. Please mail it  
(add \$1.35 postage)

\* b. I will collect it  
at the .....  
meeting

TOTAL SUM SENT \$ .....

Name .....

Address .....

..... Postcode .....

Supplement to Victorian Naturalist JAN-FEB 1983







EXTRACT

FROM THE NEWS-  
LETTER OF THE

## Victorian National Parks Association

We need a larger membership to give more "clout" to our conservation case; we need to become more professional in our submissions - the workload is now so heavy we can no longer rely solely on voluntary assistance, and we need to introduce modern technology into our office.

All of this costs money. A larger membership will keep our finances in good shape to pay for staff and for campaigns. Naturally we prefer not to become too dependent on government grants.

Do you have a relative, acquaintance, friend or colleague who may be interested in joining the VNPA? We need all ages - the young with their enthusiasm, the middle years with their capacity for hard work, and older people with experience. New members bring vitality and new ideas, but most important of all, we need increased numbers to demonstrate to politicians that our policies have strong public support.

The Association has much to offer its members - meetings, "Parkwatch" and our monthly "Newsletter", bushwalking, camping, excursions and practical work with our 15 "Friends" groups. All members have the opportunity to nominate for Council at the Annual General Meeting each year. Now is a good time to join. Payment of our modest subscription now gives membership to June 1984, almost 15 months.

If you would like to join as an individual member, Membership brochures are available from the Association at the above address.

Some of the membership fees are;

Ordinary members	\$12-50	
Pensioners, full time students	}	\$10-00
People on unemployment benefits,		
Family	\$16-00	

The rest are all on the Membership brochure.

### LADY ZEBRA FINCHES LISTEN FOR FATHER

The female zebra finch can remember the song of her father after more than two months of separation. Male zebra finches can have quite distinct songs, though the songs of close relatives - brothers, or father and son - are usually very similar. That means that when the time comes for her to choose a mate she can reject her close kin but select a bird not dissimilar to herself.

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Zebra finches learn their songs, which is why close relatives have similar songs. The problem for a female is to choose a partner who is neither too closely nor too distantly related, for the former can give rise to inbreeding maladies while the latter can break successful combinations of genes.

EXTRACT FROM  
"NEW SCIENTIST" 2/8/79



CLUB PROGRAMMEMEETINGSMay

Fri 13 8pm in the NEW Ed.  
Centre, Cr Mostyn and Har-  
greaves Sts. Speaker David  
Barber, District Fire Officer.  
The Recent Bushfires.  
Thurs 26 C'ttee, venue as above

June

Fri 10 AT THE HIGH SCHOOL  
LAWSON PDE.. Speaker Danita  
Brough, Rotary Exchange  
Student, Some Aspects of  
Canada.  
Thurs 23 C'ttee Ed. Centre

OUTINGSMay

Sat 14 Potcupine Gorge,  
Mt. Franklin North.  
Leave from S.E.C. offices  
at 1.30 pm

June

N.B. Sat 18 Glaciated  
Pavement, Eppa: lock  
Leave S.E.C. offices at  
1.15 pm.

JulyAug

Sat 13 Guildford Birds  
and Mineral Springs  
Sat&Sun 13 and 14.  
W.V.F.N.C.A. Campout  
at the Little Desert.

NOTE As from JUNE the General Meetings  
will be held in the High School in Lawson  
Pde. There are a number of advantages in  
holding the meetings there which the  
Committee feels far outweigh the slight  
disadvantage of the less central position.

All day walk in September.

The tentative program is to walk from the Wildflower  
Reserve at Taradale to the Monk on a (more or less!)  
compass course.

Treasurer's Report. All Accounts are currently paid up.  
Bank Bal. \$63-79